



Missouri Department of Higher Education

Building Missouri's future...by degrees

April 11, 2011

Henry Givens, Jr., President  
Harris-Stowe State University  
3026 Laclede Avenue  
St. Louis, Mo 63103

Dear President Givens:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your request for a waiver of the penalty for increasing tuition and required fees is approved. This action is required because the Harris-Stowe State University's tuition increase of 5% for Fiscal Year 2012 exceeds the amount allowed under the provisions of the Higher Education Student Funding Act (HESFA).

I arrived at my decision after reviewing the information provided in your Feb. 28, 2011, waiver request in the context of the evaluation criteria previously published by the Missouri Department of Higher Education. I also considered the separate recommendations of department staff and reviewed your responses to the questions I posed in my March 18<sup>th</sup> letter to you.

The overall justification given in support of the university's penalty waiver request was strong; however, certain arguments were particularly persuasive:

- When measured over the past three years, the total tuition increase is less than 1% above the CPI change for that same period (5.0% compared to 4.3%), whereas the decrease in state appropriations over that same period (including the proposed 7% reduction for FY12) is approximately 12.2%. This is all the more significant given HSSU's disproportionate reliance on state appropriations as a percentage of its unrestricted operating budget.
- In recent years HSSU has undertaken a number of measures to become more efficient and thus reduce costs, including but not limited to a major reorganization of the department of student services, eliminating positions, reducing overtime, reducing departmental budgets, restricting travel, and increasing class sizes.
- As one of only three public universities in the state that have an open enrollment policy, HSSU is unique in its mission focus on meeting the unmet needs of a regional urban setting. In this context, HSSU continues to invest significant resources to provide expanded developmental education and improve student success and retention, which are state priorities.
- The anticipated revenue from an increase in tuition in FY12 still will leave a significant funding gap that HSSU will have to make up through additional budget reduction measures.

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The university's tuition decision represents a positive response to Governor Nixon's decision to hold the FY2012 budget reduction for universities to 7% and his appeal to our public colleges and universities to hold the line on tuition increases. We owe it to Missouri's students and their families to keep universities affordable and accessible. I encourage you to continue to control tuition by aggressively seeking every possible opportunity to reduce operating costs and make the university as efficient as possible.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David R. Russell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being the most prominent.

David R. Russell, Ph.D.  
Commissioner of Higher Education

c: Constance Gully, Executive Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs, HSSU  
Paul Wagner, Deputy Commissioner, MDHE  
Joe Cornelison, General Counsel, MDHE